

*An Enlightening Commentary
into*

The Holy Qur'an

17

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and

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Chapter 55

Sūrat al-Raḥmān

(The Most Gracious)

Section (*juz*): 27

Number of Verses: 78

General Overview of the Chapter. The Chapter has seventy eight Verses and it was reveled in Medina. The designation of the Chapter derives from the first blessed Verse, "the Most Gracious" (*al-Raḥmān*), one of the Most Beautiful Names and Attributes of Allah. Imam Kāẓim (AS) said: "There is a bride [best thing] for everything, and that of the Qur'an is *Sūrat al-Raḥmān*."¹ The blessed Verse "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?" is reiterated thirty three times which constitutes the most reiteration throughout the Holy Qur'an. It would be of interest to know that the blessed Verse in question addresses both jinn and men asking them: "Which of the innumerable Blessings of your Lord will you deny? It is worthy of note that Divine Warnings were reiterated in the preceding Chapter ("My Torment and Warnings") and the blessed Chapter in question reiterates Blessings. The preceding Chapter opened with an account of Resurrection and closed with Divine Omnipotence ("In a seat of truth, near the Omnipotent Lord") and the blessed Chapter in question opens with Divine Graciousness and closes with Divine Majesty and Honor ("Blessed is the Name of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honor").

Merits of Recitation of the Chapter. Numerous traditions

¹ *Wasā'il*, vol. 4, p. 451.

have been narrated regarding the merits of recitation of the Chapter,¹ but we suffice to quote only one tradition. According to a tradition narrated from the Messenger of Allah (SAW): "One who recites *Sūrat al-Raḥmān* shall be granted Divine Graciousness upon his inability to give thanks to Allah for all His Blessings and shall be rewarded for his gratitude against Divine Blessings."²

Generally speaking, the blessed Chapter treats of different material and spiritual Divine Blessings bestowed upon His servants encompassing them all such that the blessed Chapter may bear the designations "Divine Graciousness" or "Divine Blessings," as a consequence of which the blessed Chapter opens with one of the Most Beautiful Divine Names and Attributes, "the Most Gracious" (*al-Raḥmān*) reflecting Divine encompassing Mercy and it closes with Divine Majesty and Glory.

¹ *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*; *Tafsīr Šāfi*; *Tafsīr Burhān*.

² *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, vol. 5, p. 187.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

﴿١﴾ الرَّحْمَنُ

﴿٢﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

1.The Most Gracious [Allah]!

2.He taught the Qur'an.

Exegesis

His Messenger (SAW) is a Mercy ("And We have sent you not but as a Mercy for the worlds [jinn and mankind]," 21:107). His Qur'an is also a Mercy ("And We send down the Qur'an that which is a healing and a Mercy to those who believe," 17:82).

The Divine Attribute "the Most Gracious" (*al-Raḥmān*) is attested 169 times 114 instances of which are to found in the opening of Chapters ("In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"). As mentioned above, the blessed Chapter reflects different Divine Blessings, opening with the Divine Attribute "the Most Gracious" (*al-Raḥmān*), a secret of His All-Encompassing Graciousness, since were it not owing to this Attribute of His, such Blessings would not have fallen into the shares of His friends and enemies.

The blessed Verses are saying that the Most Gracious Allah taught the Holy Qur'an. Thus, the first and the most significant Blessing is mentioned as teaching the Holy Qur'an. What an appealing and significant expression. If we reflect correctly, the Glorious Qur'an is the source of all Divine Blessings and the means to attain to any Blessing and benefiting from all material and spiritual Blessings. It is

worthy of note that treating of the Divine Blessing of "teaching the Qur'an" is mentioned prior to the creation of man and teaching him, but the natural order would be to first make mention of the reverse order, namely creation of man, the Blessing of teaching man speech, and then teaching him the Holy Qur'an. However, the majesty and glory of the Glorious Qur'an necessitates the order in question. The other point is that the blessed Verse is a response to Arab polytheists who upon hearing the Noble Prophet (SAW) calling them to prostrate before the Most Gracious Allah asked: "What is Graciousness?" ("And when it is said unto them: 'Prostrate yourselves to the Most Gracious Allah!' They say: 'And what is the Most Gracious? Shall we fall down in prostration to that which you command us?' And it increases in them only aversion." 25:60). The Holy Qur'an is saying that the Most Gracious Allah is One Who taught the Qur'an, created man, and taught him speech. It is worthy of note that second to "Allah" the Divine Attribute "the Most Gracious" is the most encompassing concept from amongst the Most Beautiful Attributes and Names of Allah, since we know that God Almighty possesses two kinds of Graciousness, general and specific. The Attribute "the Most Gracious" reflects His All-Encompassing Graciousness. The Divine Attribute "the Most Merciful" (*Raḥīm*) designates His specific Graciousness bestowed upon the faithful and the obedient. It is seemingly owing to this reason that the Attribute "the Most Gracious" is never applied to anyone other than God Almighty, unless it is accompanied by the word "servant" (*‘abd*), but "merciful" may be applied to others, since All-Encompassing Graciousness only belongs to God Almighty. In other words, specific mercy in its feeble form may be found among mankind and other creatures.

According to a tradition narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (AS), "the Most Gracious" (*Raḥmān*) is All-Encompassing and is solely a Divine Attribute, but "merciful" (*raḥīm*) is specific. In other words, the former is a specific name but is all-encompassing, namely, it is a Divine Attribute reflecting that His Mercy is All-Encompassing. But, "merciful" is a general name with specific application, namely it may be applied to anyone, but "merciful" is general name with specific application, i.e., it is applied to God Almighty and His Creatures. Likewise, the Noble Prophet (SAW) is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an as "kind and merciful" (*ra'ūf al-raḥīm*, 9:128), but they designate limited and specific mercy.

Qur'an exegetes are not unanimous regarding the issue as to who received the teaching of the Holy Qur'an. Some maintain that Gabriel, angels, the Noble Prophet (SAW), and all mankind and even jinn received it. Since the blessed Chapter in question treats of Divine Blessings bestowed upon jinn and mankind, and the question "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?" is attested thirty one times following an enumeration of Divine Blessings, the last interpretation sounds to be more appropriate, namely God Almighty taught jinn and mankind the Holy Qur'an through His Messenger, the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW).

﴿٣﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ

3.He created man.

Exegesis:

Following a treatment of the unique Blessing of teaching the Holy Qur'an in the preceding Verse, the blessed Verse in question says: "He created man." It goes without saying that the word "man" (*insān*) designates mankind rather than Prophet Adam (AS), since he rather than the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW) will be mentioned in the following Verses, though the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW) is a man par excellence. The All-Encompassing Blessing of speech which will follow serves as another argument substantiating the general application of the word "man." Thus, other interpretations are not seemingly true.

Indeed, creation of man as the most wondrous creature in the world of existence, i.e. the macrocosm included in man, the microcosm, is an unequalled Blessing, since each dimension of his being is a great Blessing. It is worthy of note that man begins its being as an unworthy semen, narrowly speaking, a microscopic being afloat in that unworthy drop of semen. Nonetheless, the being, thanks to Divine Lordship, proceeds on the path of evolution and development such that he may be promoted to the state of the most exalted and the noblest being in the world of existence. It is also worthy of note that the name of man follows the Holy Qur'an, since the Holy Qur'an encompasses all the secrets of the world of existence in their codified form and man is the synopsis of these secrets in the form of coming into being and development and each and every man reflects a version of this great and vast world!

﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

4. He taught him speech.

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse in question makes a reference to one of the most significant Blessings second to the creation of man, saying: "God Almighty taught him speech." The Arabic word *bayān* ("speech") enjoys a wide range of meaning, applied to whatever clarifies something. Thus, it not only encompasses speech but also it connotes script, writing, and different intellectual and logical arguments clarifying complicated and sophisticated issues. The word encompasses all, though the core meaning is speech.¹

Since men are habitually inclined toward speech, they underestimate it, but the fact is that speech is one of the most sophisticated and the most delicate of human acts. It may even be said that nothing is as sophisticated and delicate as speech, since sound production systems work together to produce different sounds. Lungs pump down the air and emit the same in time through larynx. Vocals tracts reverberate and produce totally different sounds to reflect satisfaction, wrath, requesting assistance, love, and hate. Then such sounds are produced with speed and particular delicacy through the tongue, lips, teeth, and the oral cavity. In other words, the monotonous and prolonged sound emitting from the larynx is fashioned in different forms and measures thereby different sounds are produced. On the other hand, the coinage of words is raised such that owing to intellectual developments, man coins different words to meet his material and spiritual requirements. It is a source of surprise

¹ According to a tradition narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (AS) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse "He taught him speech," he said: "Bayān is applied to the Greatest Divine Name (ism a'ẓam) through which everything may be comprehended (*Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*, under the blessed Verse in question).

that there exists no limit as to the quantity of vocabulary and the number of languages spoken in the world is so large that it evades determination. Novel words and languages are formed in time. Some say that the languages of the world run to three thousand, but some even maintain that the number exceeds the same.¹ They were seemingly after enumerating languages, since the number of regional dialects and accents far exceeds the aforesaid numbers as there are many instances in which the inhabitants of two adjacent villages speak two regionally different languages.

Another point is the rules of syntax governing clauses and also expression of arguments and feelings are carried out through intellect and reason as the soul of speech. Thus, speech is peculiar to man. It is true that many animals produce sounds to communicate but the sounds produced by them is so limited in number and they are rather vague compared to human speech which is of wide application and boundless, since God Almighty has provided man with the required faculty of speech. Furthermore, with due consideration of the role of speech in the developments of human life and the emergence and developments of civilizations, one may certainly believe that it is solely thanks to this great Blessing that mankind may pass down their knowledge and experience from one generation to the following one and thereby cause the advancement of knowledge and science and the developments in civilizations, religions, and ethics. Put the case that such great Blessing is withheld, human societies will rapidly move towards regression. If the word "speech" herein be applied to script and writing and even different kinds of arts, its extraordinary role in the life of mankind is furthered clarified. Now it becomes crystal clear why mention is made of God Almighty teaching man speech following the creation of man treated in the blessed Chapter in question which encompasses a compendium of Divine Blessings.

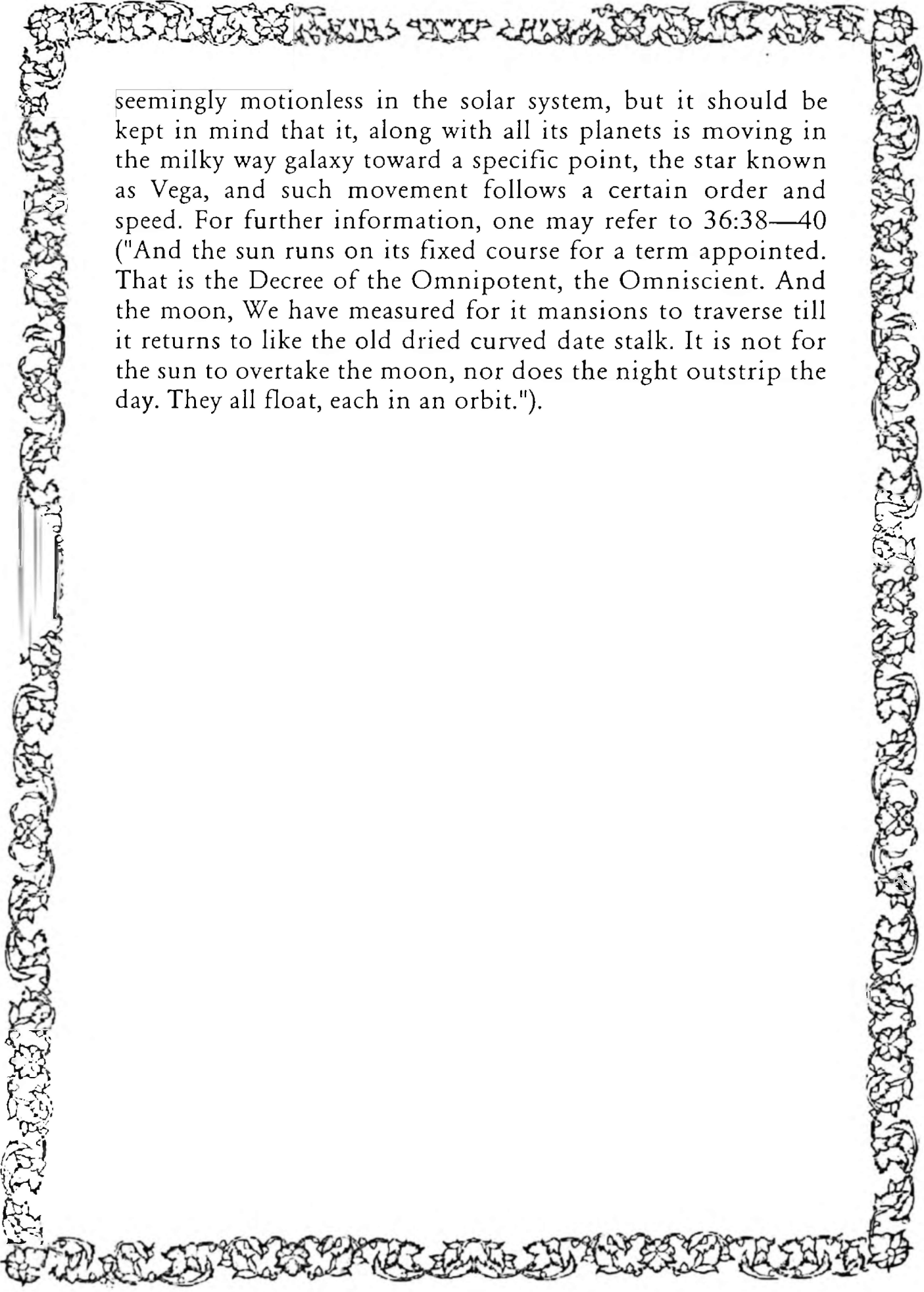
¹ Farīd Wajdī's *Encyclopedia*, vol. 8, p. 368, s.v. Lughā.

﴿٥﴾ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

5. The sun and the moon follow their measured
out calculation.

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse in question treats of the fourth great Divine Blessing bestowed by the God Almighty, the Most Gracious. The blessed Verse is saying that the sun and the moon follow their courses with measured out calculation. The existence of the sun is one of the greatest Divine Blessings bestowed upon man, since life would be unimaginable in the solar system without the light and heat of the sun. It was mentioned above that any motion on the earth springs from the solar light and heat. Growth of plants and production of provision, precipitation, and blowing of winds are all thanks to this Divine Blessing. The moon, in its turn, plays a key role in human life. It is the light of his dark nights, its gravity is the sources of ebb and flow in oceans result in life in seas and watering of rivers flowing onto seas. Besides, the fixed course of the twain circulations, that of the moon round the earth and that of the earth round the sun results in the orderly emergence of nights and days, years, months, and seasons. They make human life order through which man may make use of the same for his commercial, industrial, and agricultural activities. Without such order, human life could never have any order. It is worthy of note that not only the movement of these celestial bodies are precisely measured out, but also the quantity of their mass and gravity and their distance from the earth and from each other are all well calculated, without which great disruptions would occur in the solar system and consequently in human life. It is also worthy of note that although the sun is

A decorative border with a repeating floral and vine pattern surrounds the text.

seemingly motionless in the solar system, but it should be kept in mind that it, along with all its planets is moving in the milky way galaxy toward a specific point, the star known as Vega, and such movement follows a certain order and speed. For further information, one may refer to 36:38—40 ("And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term appointed. That is the Decree of the Omnipotent, the Omniscient. And the moon, We have measured for it mansions to traverse till it returns to like the old dried curved date stalk. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit.").

﴿٦﴾ وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ

6. And the plants and the trees both prostrate themselves to Him.

Exegesis:

According to Rāghib's *Mufradāt*, the Arabic word *najm* is applied to "star" and "stemless plant." The word originally denotes "rise," and the designation *najm* is owing to its "rise." It is common knowledge that all the food used by mankind originally derives from plants, some of which are directly consumed by man and some are used to feed those animals constituting human dietary ingredients. It is applied to sea animals, since they feed on minute plants growing in millions throughout water under sun light floating in between waves. Thus the word *najm* is applied to small, creeping plants like pumpkin and cucumber and the word *shajar* designates types of plants with stems, stalks, and trunks, like crops and fruit bearing trees. The Arabic verbal form *yasjudān* ("the two prostrate themselves") connotes unconditional submission against the rules of creation in vein with human benefits, a Divinely appointed fixed course which they follow without any alteration. It also alludes to their monotheistic secrets since each leaf or seed contain wondrous Signs of Divine Greatness and Omniscience ("Each leaf is a book of Divine Omniscience"). Some also maintain that the Arabic word *najm* may connote stars, but the aforesaid exegesis is more consistent with the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse.

﴿٧﴾ وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ

﴿٨﴾ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ

7. And the heaven: He raised it high, and He set up two Balances.

8. In order that you may not transgress Balance.

Exegesis:

Following a treatment of Divine Graciousness and the blessings of teaching, speech, calculation of the sun, the moon, and prostration of creatures which implies Divine relation with man and nature, the blessed Verses in question discuss the manner of man's relation with society. Maintaining the balance refers to moderation as per which immoderation and inflicting loss is unjustifiable. It is worthy of note that the fifth creature upon which Divine Graciousness and Mercy are bestowed is the heaven that enjoys an exalted state. The Arabic word *samā'* ("heaven, sky") is cognate with *sumūw* ("exaltedness, height, elevation from the earth") and the clause "He raised it high" may connote the exaltedness of planets, stars, galaxies, and celestial spheres, such that these creatures are both higher and more exalted than the earth, since heavenly bodies are quantitatively and qualitatively higher than the earth and whatever exists on it. The point is that man is the synopsis of all earthly and heavenly creatures and nobler and more exalted than most of the existent beings. "He set upon two Balances" is that setting up the two Balances constitute the sixth Manifestation and Gracious Emanation. Balance is employed for weighing and assaying something by something else like balance and scale, even if the thing happens to be immaterial, like assaying knowledge by something else. It also connotes the equality

and equilibrium between the constituent elements of the thing, as it is said that the constituents of these two things are in equilibrium. Some maintain that balance is used for weighing and assaying and maintaining perceptible and immaterial equilibrium, since balance is a polysemous word with different implications. Balance may be applied in all matters like beliefs and ethics and whatever may be assayed in everyday and natural issues in human society and civilization so that people may not be wronged in transactions and they may not incur loss and damage but the balance be maintained, namely justice be administered in human society. It may entail what exists in equilibrium like limitation of the irascible and concupiscent faculties. The blessed Verse 8 provides an interesting conclusion of the same adding that the goal of setting up balance in the world of existence is that you may maintain the balance and refrain from transgressing the bounds. You are also a part of this great world and you may never live inconsistently with it. There is a system and a balance in this world and you have to have the same. Without such balance and order, the world will perish. If you lack order and balance in your lives, you will tread the path to perdition. The truth behind monotheism is that the prevailing principles of it are all the same everywhere.

﴿٩﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

9. And observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient.

Exegesis:

Failing to attend to balance, equity, fairness, and justice in respect to the rights of people will lead man to immoderation and injustice. Islam provides people with significant and precise injunctions for the maintenance of justice and balance such that according to traditions, a judge wearing tight shoes is not supposed to issue verdicts lest the tightness of the shoes may affect his judgment and lead him to haste and intemperance thereby he may err as to the administration of justice. According to another tradition, valuable commerce rests upon truth. According to a tradition narrated from Imam 'Alī (AS): "Merchants are wrong-doers and wrong-doers shall abide in Hellfire, unless his transactions be based on truth."¹ Imam 'Alī (AS) ordered that adulterated coins be cast into wells so that they may not be used for transactions.² He walked in the market of Kufa and at times stopped in the middle of the market saying: "O merchants! Ask God Almighty for good. Find Divine Blessing in being lenient toward people. Refrain from telling lies in transactions. Abstain from injustice. Be not involved in usury. The said tradition is attested in *Kāfī*, *Man la Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, *Majālis*, and *Tahdhīb*.

It is worthy of note that the blessed Verse emphasizes maintaining balance and justice saying: "Observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient." The word "balance" is attested thrice in these blessed Verses,

¹ *Furū' Kāfī*, vol. 5, p. 150.

² *Kāfī*, vol. 5, p. 160.

though it was possible to use pronouns in the second and third instances. It reflects that the word balance (*mīzān*) is employed in three different senses and using pronouns may not do justice in conveying the meanings and the contextual meaning of the Verses also bear witness to the same, since the first instance implies the balance, criterion, and laws set up by God Almighty throughout the world of existence. The second instance treats of abstention of human beings from disobedience in all the matters concerning individual and social lives which are naturally more limited. The third instance emphasizes the issue of weighing in the narrower sense of the word saying that one may not make the balance deficient in weighing things and the last instance is more restricted in scope.

Thus, there is an interesting consistency in the Verses in the hierarchy of balance from larger circles toward smaller ones. The significance of balance in human life in any of the aforesaid senses is such that taking out the balance in the narrowest sense will entail chaos, problems, and disagreement. The broader the sense, the more disorder will prevail. Based on the above, it is clarified that the reason behind the interpretation of balance as the presence of Imam (AS) is that the presence of the Infallible Imam (AS) serves as a criterion for assaying truth and falsehood which may lead to perception of truth and finding guidance. Interpretation of balance to the Holy Qur'an is in this light. It is, however, worthy of note that all these blessed Verses treat of Divine Blessings reflecting that the existence of balance in the entirety of the world of existence, human society, social relations, commerce, and transactions are all Divine Bounties.

﴿١٠﴾ وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ

﴿١١﴾ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ

10. And He created the earth for mankind.

11. Therein are fruits and magnificent date-palms.

Exegesis:

The blessed Verses in question descend from the heaven onto the earth, saying: "God Almighty created the earth for the life of mankind. The Arabic word *anām* is interpreted differently by Qur'an exegetes as mankind, jinn and men, and any animate being. It is worthy of note that the contextual meaning indicates that jinn and men are being herein intended.

The earth which is mentioned herein as a remarkable Divine Blessing is mentioned in other Qur'anic Verses as "cradle" serves as a secure and serene abode whose significance may not be normally perceived by most of us, but an earthquake disturbs everything and volcanic eruption may bury a city beneath magma, fire, and smoke. Such phenomena indicate that the serene earth is such a great Blessing, particularly if we reflect upon what scientists say concerning the velocity of the earth's rotation on its axis and its circling around the sun, the significance of such serenity despite the staggering velocity, it is further clarified that it entails different types of motion. The employment of the past verbal forms *wada'a* ("set up") and *rafa'a* ("raised") regarding the earth and the heaven both embodies a delicate expression in terms of juxtaposition or contrast and a meaningful allusion to the submission of the earth and its resources against mankind.

As it is reflected in the Holy Qur'an (67:15): "He it is

Who had made the earth obedient to you. Therefore walk in its path and eat of His provision. And to Him shall be the Resurrection." The blessed Verse 11 treats of the tenth Blessings, namely the provisions, saying that there are fruits and magnificent date palms. The Arabic word *fākiha* denotes any kind of fruit and some interpret it as any kind of fruit but dates which is unjustifiable. Date palms are mentioned separately, but the repetition may reflect the significance of dates and date palms. The word *akmām* is the plural form of *kum* designating the sheath covering fruits. *Kumma* denotes sleeve covering arm and hand and *kum* is the night cap covering the head. The fruit of palm trees is initially covered by a sheath. Then, the fruit splits the sheath. The depiction used herein may refer to its astounding beauty or the benefits concealed in the sheath. It contains juice and essence which are both nutritive and medicinal. Besides, like a womb, the sheath fosters the fruit for a while and preserves it from blights. The sheath will be removed when the fruit may be exposed to sunshine and air. Above all, the peculiar condition of dates is that it is initially in the sheath and then it splits and forms clusters making it facile to be picked. Were tall date palms like other fruit bearing trees like apple, it would be so hard to harvest the produce.

﴿١٢﴾ وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ

12. And also corns, with leaves and stalks for fodder and sweet-scented plants.

Exegesis:

Other earthly benefits include crops, like wheat, barley, millet, and lintel growing from the earth on which man feeds. The Arabic word '*asf*' denotes the stalk and leaf of grain preserving it until it grows fully. After harvesting and flailing, they will be used as fodder. Another benefit of the earth is growing sweet scented plants, but the Arabic word *rayḥān* may be applied to all flowers and sweet scented plants by smelling which man may derive pleasure.

﴿١٣﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

13. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Reiteration of issues constitutes significant requirements for creating culture. It is used at times for reminding different Blessings, like the blessed Verse in question "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?" Repetition may also be used to warn sinners, like "Woe unto the liars at that time." It is worthy of note that following an enumeration of different material and immaterial Blessings, the blessed Verse in question thus addresses jinn and men: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?" Such Blessings are most precious, Blessings encompassing all your lives, each of which serves as a telling token of Divine Omnipotence, Graciousness, and Love. How may one deny them? The rhetorical question is employed herein to bid the addressee to make affirmations as to Divine Blessings bestowed upon jinn and men. Thus, according to the tradition narrated in the beginning of the exegesis of the Chapter bids us to reply by saying: "We do not deny any of your Blessings. Although the preceding blessed Verses solely make mention of mankind without making the slightest reference to jinn, but the following blessed Verses reflect that the antecedent of the dual pronoun *kumā* ("both of you") are jinn and men.

It is worthy of note that by mentioning such rhetorical question, God Almighty makes jinn and men encounter the reality to reflect upon such issues and without recourse to any other injunction ask themselves: "Could any of these Divine Blessings be denied?" If the answer is negative, why do

they not recognize their Lord? Why do they not make use of showing gratitude toward their Lord as a means of recognizing His Lordship? Why do they not prostrate themselves at His Divine Threshold? The phrase "which of" (*bi-ayya*, lit. "to which") indicates that each of these Blessings is a telling token of His Lordship, Graciousness, and Beneficence, let alone all His Blessings. The least reflection upon the aforementioned twelve Blessings (the Holy Qur'an, creation of man, teaching speech, well measured calculation of time, creation of plants and all kinds of trees, creation of the heaven, predominance of rules, creation of the earth with its characteristics, creation of kinds of fruit, creation of date palm, creation of crops, creation of flowers and sweet scented plants) along with the details, delicacies, and secrets concealed in each of them will suffice to make man show his gratitude toward God Almighty and cause him to search for obtaining knowledge as to the source of all these Blessings. It is for the same reason that God Almighty asks the rhetorical question following an enumeration of His Blessings. The rhetorical question will be asked thirty one times in the following blessed Verses after enumerating further Blessings.

﴿١٤﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ

﴿١٥﴾ وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ

﴿١٦﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

14. He created man from dry clay like the clay of pottery.

15. And the jinn: He created from smokeless flames of fire.

16. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic word *ṣalṣāl* denotes "dry clay, argillaceous earth." *Fakhkhār* designates "pottery clay." *Mārij* indicates "flame." Following an enumeration of His Blessings, including making mention of the creation of man in passing, the blessed Verses in question (14-16) make an account of the creation of jinn and man. It serves as a telling token of His Omnipotence and also provides everyone with lessons, saying: "He created man from dry clay like clay of pottery." The word *ṣalṣāl* denotes dry, rattling clay. The word *fakhkhār* is applied to any kind of pottery which rattles upon being touched. Different Qur'anic Verses and expressions regarding the source of human creation clearly reflect that man used to be earth in the beginning ("O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, they indeed We have created you from dust, then from semen, then from a clot that We may make it clear to you. And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants, then that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies and among you there is

he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water on it, it is stirred and it swells and puts forth every beauteous kind of growth," 22:5) then it is mingled with water and turns into clay ("He it is Who created you from clay and then decreed a term and there is with Him another appointed term yet you doubt," 6:2; "And when your Lord said unto angels: 'I am going to create man from dried rattling clay of foul smelling mud," 15:28) then it became sticky ("Then ask them: 'Are they stronger as creation or those whom We created?' Indeed, We created them of a sticky clay," 37:11). Later on it dried up and became rattling pottery clay as mentioned in the blessed Verse in question. How long did these stages take? How long did man stop at each of these stages? What were the factors leading to these transitional states? Our knowledge fails to uncover such secrets as the knowledge thereof rests with God Almighty alone. What is certain is that such expressions serve as telling tokens of a reality which is significantly linked to educational issues of mankind – the primeval mass forming human body was the most unworthy and the lowliest of all matters to be found on the earth, but God Almighty created such worthy creature out of such unworthy matter such that man became the noblest of His creatures. It is also worthy of note that the true value of human being is the Divine Spirit as it is reflected in Qur'anic Verses (e.g. "Therefore, when I have fashioned him completely and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, then fall down prostrating yourselves unto him," 15:29). Thus, man may find his path towards perfection through the recognition of this truth such that he may know which way he is supposed to tread to find his true value in the world of existence.

The blessed Verse 15 treats of the creation of jinn, saying: "And the jinn: He created from smokeless flames of fire." The

Arabic word *mārij* is cognate with *maraj* ("mingling, mixture") which herein connotes different flames of fire, since blazing fire appears in different colors, red, yellow, blue, and white. It is not known either how jinn were created from such colorful flames of fire. Likewise, other characteristics of jinn are known to us by the True Dawn, namely the Glorious Qur'an, Divine Revelation. Our limited knowledge may never allow us to deny nor to ignore such truths, as they are proven through Divine Revelation, though they defy our knowledge. It is worthy of note that most of the creatures known to us were created out of water, earth, wind, and fire. The source of human creation was water and earth but that of jinn is wind and fire, even if, like ancients, we regard them simple and element or like modern scientists who regard them to be composite, made up from different constituent elements. Such duality in the origins of creation causes many differences between the twain. The blessed Verse 16 follows the enumeration of the Blessings one of which was the creation of man. It reiterates the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿١٧﴾ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

﴿١٨﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

17. The Lord of the two easts and the Lord of the two wests.

18. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse 17 treats of another Divine Blessing saying that God Almighty is the Lord of two easts and two wests. It is true that each and every day in a year's time, the sun rises from a point and sets in another, thus the number of easts and wests run to the number of the days in a year, but taking into account the maximum northern and southern axes of the sun, we notice that other easts and wests fall between the twain. Such order is the origin of the emergence of the four seasons of the year engendering abundance and it actually emphasizes and completes the contents of the foregoing blessed Verses treating of the well measured calculation of the course of the sun and the moon and the existence of the balance in the creation of the heavens. Generally speaking, the blessed Verse reflects the precise order of creation, motions of the sun and the moon and the Blessings thereby bestowed upon man. Some Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the two easts and the two wests herein connote the rising and setting of the sun and the moon, but the first interpretation is seemingly more appropriate, particularly owing to the fact that a number of Islamic traditions make references to the same and instance of which is a tradition narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Alī (AS) as per the exegesis of the blessed

Verse in question, he says that the easts of the beginning of winter and summer are discrete. Do you not see that the sun approximates and distances. It is a reference to the rising of the sun in the heaven in summer and the setting of the sun in winter.¹ The foregoing remarks clarify the reason behind Oaths like: "Therefore, I swear by the Lord of all the points of sunrise and sunset in the east and the west that certainly We are All-Mighty," 70:40). The reason is that reference is made to all the easts and wests of the sun during a year, whereas the blessed Verse in question makes a reference to the solar ascending and descending arches. Again, the following Verse thus addresses jinn and men asking them: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, vol. 5, p. 190.

﴿١٩﴾ مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ

﴿٢٠﴾ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ

﴿٢١﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

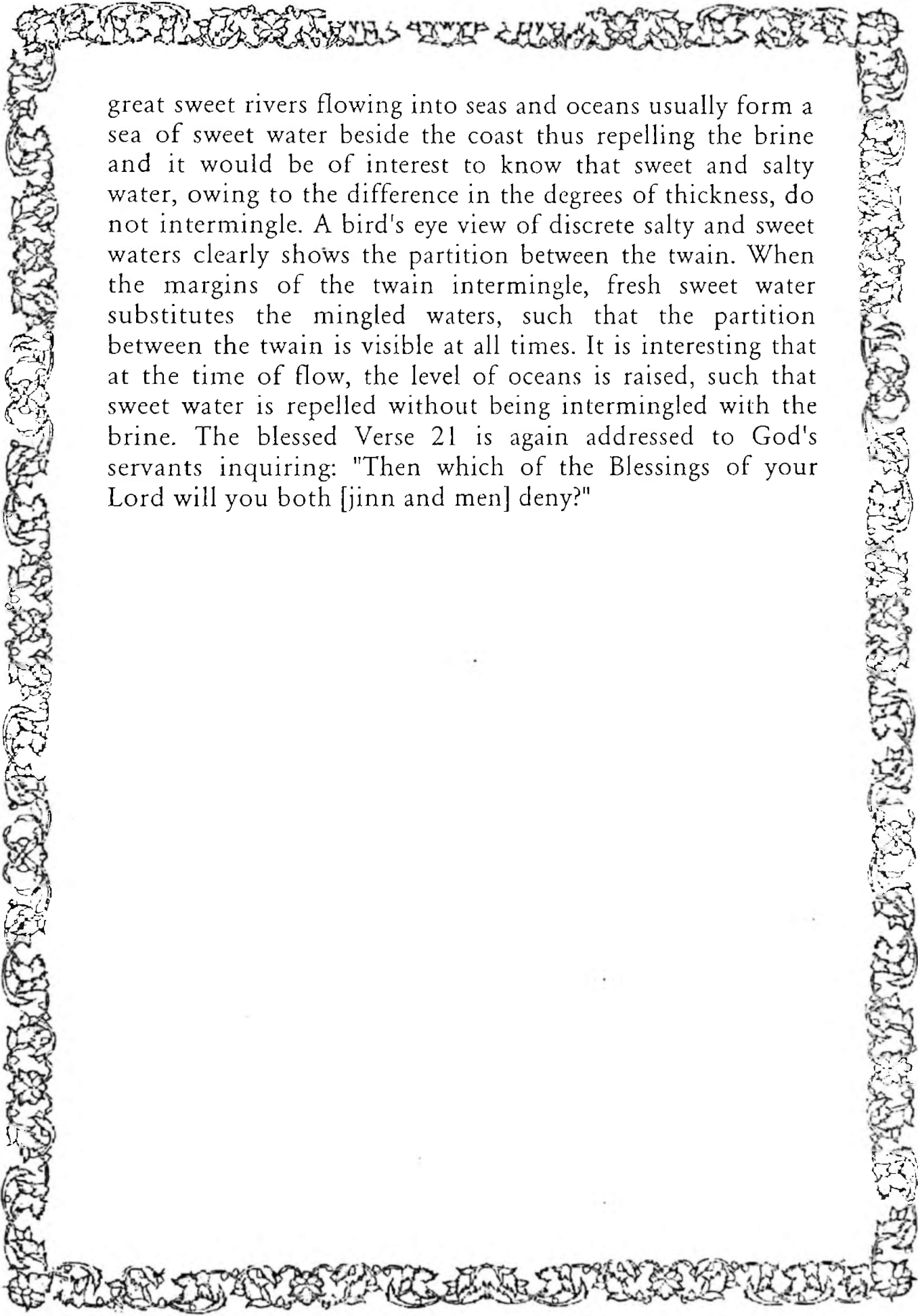
19. He let loose the two salty and sweet seas meeting together.

20. Between them is a barrier so that none of them can transgress.

21. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic verbal form *maraja* designates "let loose" and the Arabic noun *barzakh* denotes "a barrier between two things." Resuming the account of Divine Blessings mention is made of seas, but not all seas. The particular quality of certain seas is an astonishing phenomenon serving as a token of Divine Absolute Omnipotence. It also serves as a means of producing certain things used by men. Thus, the blessed Verses are saying that He juxtaposed two different seas while they meet; however, there is a barrier between the twain such that one may not agitate and prevail over the other. As it is reflected elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an, the twain seas are the salty and the sweet seas: "And it is He Who let loose the two seas: one palatable and sweet and the other salty and bitter and He set a barrier and a complete partition between them" (25:53). Qur'anic exegetes disagree as to the location of the two sweet and salty seas and the fact that one does not prevail the other and the nature of the barrier separating the twain. However, mention was already made of the point in the exegesis of Chapter 25 saying that

A decorative border with a repeating floral and vine motif surrounds the text.

great sweet rivers flowing into seas and oceans usually form a sea of sweet water beside the coast thus repelling the brine and it would be of interest to know that sweet and salty water, owing to the difference in the degrees of thickness, do not intermingle. A bird's eye view of discrete salty and sweet waters clearly shows the partition between the twain. When the margins of the twain intermingle, fresh sweet water substitutes the mingled waters, such that the partition between the twain is visible at all times. It is interesting that at the time of flow, the level of oceans is raised, such that sweet water is repelled without being intermingled with the brine. The blessed Verse 21 is again addressed to God's servants inquiring: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٢٢﴾ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ

﴿٢٣﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

22. Out of both seas come out pearl and coral.

23. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Resuming the account of Divine Blessings, the blessed Verse 22 is saying that pearl and coral come out of the twain seas. It is worthy of note that interesting adornments are made of pearl and coral. They are also used in medical treatments and they constitute commodities and merchandise as well. Many benefits are accrued out of them. Thus, they are being referred to as two Blessings. Pearls are transparent and precious things fostered in mothers of pearl in the depth of the seas. The larger they are, the more precious they become. They are also used in many medical treatments. Former physicians made different potions out of them for strengthening the heart, the nervous system and warding off different kinds of breathing ailments, fear, kidney and eye complications, bad breath, kidney and bladder stones, and jaundice.¹

Coral is herein interpreted by some exegetes as small pearl, but such interpretation is far from being true. It is an animate being similar to a twig growing in the depth of seas. It was regarded by scientists for some time to be a kind of plant, but later on it became evident that it belongs to the animal world. It sticks to the bottom of the sea and at times covers a vast area to increase in time and form coral islands.

¹ *Tuhfa Hakīm Mu'min; Lughat-nama-yi DikhHūdā; etc.*

The best kind of coral is red in color and the redder, the more precious it is. Besides serving as adornment, it is applied in medicine and many benefits have been enumerated for the same. Instances of its medical applications include potions made from it which are sued for strengthening the heart, removal of viper's venom, strengthening of the nervous system, treatment of diarrhea and womb bleeding. It is also said that it is useful for treatment of epilepsy. The following Verse further emphasizes on Divine Blessings saying: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

A tradition narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (AS) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse "He let loose the two salty and sweet seas meeting together," according to which "Alī and Fāṭima (AS) are two deep seas, none of the twain transgresses the other out of the twain seas pearl and coral, namely Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (AS) came out."¹ The same point is also attested in *Tafsīr al-Manthūr* (vol. 6, p. 42). It may be attested in most of Shī'ī exegetic works, e.g. Ṭabarsī's *Majma' al-Bayān* and also in *Tafsīr Burhān*, *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, *Tafsīr Ṣāfi*, and also in some of Sunnī exegetic works with slight variations. However, it is known that the Glorious Qur'an has different layers thereby one single Verse may have several or tens of meanings. The content of the aforesaid tradition derives from Qur'anic layers and is not inconsistent with the literal meaning of the same.

¹ *Tafsīr Qumī*, vol. 2, p. 344.

﴿٢٤﴾ وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ

﴿٢٥﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

24. And His are the ships built, like mountains.

25. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

In the treatment of other Blessings, the Holy Qur'an did not make use of "His" (*lahū*), but regarding ships, Divine Revelation says "His are built ships" intending to say that even the product built by you is also His, since the idea, plan, and the physical strength required for building and making things all spring from Him. Thus, the Holy Qur'an is saying that ships floating in seas with sails resembling mountains are all manifestations of Divine Graciousness. Mujāhid is quoted as saying that the Arabic word *munsha'āt* is applied to sailing ships. The point is that when you see the Signs of Divine Graciousness, Omnipotence, and Greatness, note that Divine Favors include ships made up of pieces of wood upon which you embark and travel in such vast seas. Then, how do you deny your Lord's Bounties and Blessings. Who, other than God Almighty, the Omnipotent, has given you such might and power?

﴿٢٦﴾ كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

﴿٢٧﴾ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

﴿٢٨﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

26. Whatsoever is on the earth is transient.

27. And only the Essence of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor shall remain forever.

28. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The preceding blessed Verses treated of Divine Blessings and the blessed Verse 26 is saying that the time of benefitting from these Blessings is brief. Seize the opportunity since you are all transient. The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse designates that all things are transient and trifling in their essence, but what remains is Divine Essence which is not subject to transience. Now, a question arises here: "How the question of transience may be regarded as a Divine Blessing? Such transience may not lead to absolute effacement and annihilation, but it is a window to the world of everlastingness, a tunnel or path leading to the abode of everlastingness. The world with all its bounties is a prison to believers and a way out of this world is a way out of the dark and small prison.

The blessed Verse 27 is saying that only the Honorable and Great Essence of you Lord shall remain. The Arabic word *wajh* literally denotes "face, countenance" perceived in the first encounter with someone, but employed regarding God Almighty, it connotes His Pure Essence.

The blessed Verse 28 addresses creatures once more asking: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٢٩﴾ يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

﴿٣٠﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

29. Whosoever is in the heavens and on earth begs Him to meet his demands. Every day He is in some affair.

30. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Invocation may be expressed through verbal or non-verbal language. Man is in need of God Almighty at all times, whether he invokes him to meet his demands or he fails to do likewise. The point is that God Almighty is in the process of creation at all times and each and every day He plans something anew and his meeting the demands of the needy and those who invoke him to meet their needs is likewise. One day He bestows might upon some people and the other day he ruins them owing to their disobedience and committing sins. One day He bestows health and youth and the other day He inflicts weakness upon certain people. One day He removes grieves and sorrows from hearts and the another day He causes certain people to feel grief and sorrow. In short, He creates something anew according to His Wisdom and the best order. Attending to this truth clarifies our constant need for His Pre Essence on the one hand and removes the veils of disappointment, desperation, neglect, and vanity from hearts on the other. "Every day, He is in some affair." It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Alī (AS) that in one of his sermons he said: "Praise and eulogy belong to God Almighty Who shall never die, nor shall end the wonders of His creation, since He is in some affair each and every day creating something new from

nothing."¹ According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question, God Almighty's affair include absolving people of their sins, removing their pains and sorrows, causing certain people to have a more exalted state, and denigrating some others.²

It is also worthy of note that the Arabic word *yawm* employed herein is the opposite of "night," since its semantic range encompasses a long period of time and also hours and seconds, connoting that God Almighty is in some affair at any time. The blessed Verse 30, following an account of the constant Blessings and meeting the demands of all creatures including those of the heavens and the earth asks the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Uṣūl Kāfi*; *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, *Tafsīr Burhān*, *Majma' al-Bayān*, under the blessed Verse in question.

² *Majma' al-Bayān*, under the blessed Verse in question; *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*; Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

﴿٣١﴾ سَتَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَا الثَّقَلَانِ

﴿٣٢﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

31. We shall attend to your records, O you two classes
[jinn and men]!

32. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you
both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic verbal form *sanafrughu* does not here in connote bringing to an end and completing something, but it designates giving special attention and dealing completely with some significant affair. The blessed Verse 31 is saying that attention shall be paid to the records of all Blessings. All the preceding blessed Verses so far treat of different material and immaterial Blessings, but the blessed Verse 31 is saying that We shall shortly attend to your records. O jinn and men! God Almighty shall precisely attend to the records of all the deeds, words, and intentions of the jinn and men and Rewards and Chastisements proportionate to their words, deeds, and intentions shall be apportioned to them. It is also worthy of note that according to the author of *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*, since jinn and men are superior to other creatures and possess intellect, free choice, and distinction, they are being referred to as *thaqalān*. The blessed Verse 32 reiterates the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٣٣﴾ يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ

السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ

﴿٣٤﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

33.O assembly of jinn and men! If you have power to pass beyond¹ the zones of the heavens and the earth, then pass beyond [them]. But you shall never be able to pass them, except with extraordinary power.

34.Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic word *ma'shar* is cognate with *'ashr* ("ten") and *'ashīra* ("relatives"). The word is attested thrice in the Holy Qur'an in all the instances of which jinn precedes men. The reason lying behind such precedence may be the points that jinn exceed men in terms of quantity, jinn were created before men ("And We created jinn before [men]"), and jinn are more prepared to soar in the heavens. Nevertheless, men precede jinn in some other instances. The Arabic word *sultān* denotes material strength and might leading some to conquer others. It is also applied to academic authority and solid arguments leading to academic and intellectual authority. It is worthy of note that the blessed Verse in question may also allude to the world, astronautics, transcending the atmosphere of the earth, and penetration into the heavens, since the depth of the earth, the farthest points in space, and celestial bodies may be conquered by jinn. The clause *in*

¹ The Arabic verbal form *tanfudhū* derives from *n-f-dh*, literally denoting "tearing asunder and pass through something."

astaṭa'tum in lieu of *law astaṭa'tum* connotes contingency. The clause *illā bi-sultān-in* alludes to the fact that it is possible to penetrate into the heavens and the earth, particularly to the effect that in the Glorious Qur'an, the Arabic word *sultān* connotes academic authority. Taking into account, the contextual meanings of the preceding and the following blessed Verses, it may also make a reference to Resurrection and the impossibility of evading Divine Tribunal. Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying: "O jinn and men! If you truly intend to evade Divine Recompense and Chastisement, make an attempt to transcend the boundaries of the heavens and the earth and thereby leave the bounds of His Omnipotence. However, you may never embark upon the same, unless through Divine Might and such Might is not at your disposal. You may never evade the Tribunal of Divine Justice. Wherever you go, you shall be Divine Realm. Wherever you stand, it shall be His Sovereignty. Such weak creatures may never transcend the boundaries of Divine Sovereignty. Likewise, Imam 'Alī (AS) in the exhilarating invocation of Kumayl says: "No one may evade Your Omnipotence and Sovereignty." The blessed Verse 34 is again asking the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٣٥﴾ يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوَاظٌ مِّن نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرَانِ

﴿٣٦﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

35. There shall be sent against you both, smokeless flames of fire and molten brass, and you shall not be able to defend yourselves.

36. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

To further emphasize the inability of jinn and men to evade Divine Justice, the blessed Verse 35 is saying: "There shall be sent against you both, smokeless flames of fire and molten brass, and you shall not be able to defend yourselves." Then, they may not seek succor from anyone, since angels shall surround you on the one hand and burning flames of fire and dark and suffocating smoke surrounds the Plain of Judgment on the other. There shall remain no way out. The Arabic word *shuwāz* designates great and awe-inspiring flames of fire. The Arabic word *nuhās* denotes the smoky and red flames of fire that turn copper in color. It is a source of surprise that Divine Tribunal is surrounded by Divine agents, suffocating smoke, and blazing fire and there shall remain no way but to attend the Tribunal and submit to the Verdict. The blessed Verse 36 further asks: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٣٧﴾ فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ

﴿٣٨﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

37. Then when the heaven is rent asunder, and it becomes red like molten oil [you shall not bear the horrible incidents].

38. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Resuming the account of the preceding blessed Verses regarding some of the incidents that shall occur on the Day of Resurrection, the blessed Verse 37 treat of further depictions of the scenes of Resurrection and the manner of attending to records and Divine Recompense. Thus the blessed Verse 37 is saying that when the heaven is rent asunder and turns rosy like molten oil, horrible incidents shall occur such that no one may bear them. All the blessed Qur'anic Verses concerning Resurrection clearly reflect that the present order of the world shall be disturbed on that Day and very horrible incidents shall occur throughout the world. Stars, planets, the earth shall undergo alterations and incidents shall occur which may not be imagined by us. Instances of such incidents include tearing asunder of celestial bodies turning rosy like molten oil. The word *warda* designates flower and most of flowers are red in color. The word *dihān* is employed in the sense of molten oil which is often different in color. The blessed Verse 38 reiterates the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٣٩﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌ

﴿٤٠﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

39. Therefore, on that Day no question shall be asked of men or jinn as to their sins.

40. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Following an account of the formative occurrences of Resurrection, the blessed Verse 39 treats of the state of sinners on that Day saying that jinn and men shall not be questioned concerning their sins, since everything shall be evident on the Day of Emergence (*yawm al-burūz*) and faces reflect everything. It may be falsely imagined that the blessed Verse in question is inconsistent with those emphasizing the questioning of servants on the Day of Resurrection, e.g. "But Stop them, indeed they are to be questioned," (37:24) and "Therefore, by your Lord, We shall certainly question all of them for all they used to do," (15:92-93); however, the point is that the Day of Resurrection shall be a very long Day and man has to pass different paths and stations and spend some time at each place. According to a number of traditions, such stopping places shall be fifty in number. Questions shall not be asked at some of these places, since faces reveal inward secrets. At some of these places, mouths shall be sealed and bodily organs bear witness to deeds and words ("This Day We shall seal up their mouths and their hands shall speak unto Us and their legs shall bear witness to what they used to earn," 36:65). There are still other places where questions shall be precisely asked (37:24; 15:92-93). Further, men shall come up pleading ("The Day when everyone shall come up

pleading for himself and everyone shall be paid in full for what he did and they shall not be dealt with unfairly," 16:111). In short, each and every scene has its own conditions and each scene shall be more horrible than another. The blessed Verse 40 asks the rhetorical question once more: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٤١﴾ يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ

﴿٤٢﴾ فَبَأَى آلَاءَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

41. The sinners shall be known by their marks and they will be seized by their forelocks and their feet [and shall be cast into Hell].

42. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Those who committed all kinds of sins and disobeyed Divine Command by all their beings from their hair to their feet shall be seized on the Day of Resurrection by their hair and feet to be cast into Hellfire. The Arabic word *sīmā* is employed in the sense of "mark." The Arabic word *nawāṣī* is the plural form of *nāṣiya* designating "forelock." On that Day, questions shall not be asked since sinners shall be recognized by their marks and faces. Some shall have smiling and brilliant faces which reflect their faith and righteous good deeds and some other shall have dark, ugly, and sullen faces, reflecting their faithlessness and evil deeds. The blessed Verse further adds that then they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet and they shall be cast into Hell. The scene is quite agonizing and awe-inspiring. The blessed Verse 42 is a warning against Resurrection and a Favor bestowed upon everyone: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٤٣﴾ هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ

﴿٤٤﴾ يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آِنٍ

﴿٤٥﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

43. This is the Hell which the sinners denied.
 44. They shall move between Hellfire and the fierce
 boiling water.
 45. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you
 both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Denial of Paradise, Hell, and Resurrection lead man to join the people of Hell. The antecedent of the Arabic demonstrative pronoun *hādhīhi* ("this") in the blessed Verse 43 is the preceding blessed Verse. It is as if angels or guards of Hell say unto sinners that this is Hell against which Prophets warned you but you denied and belied it out of arrogance, vanity, enmity, and ignorance. The blessed Verse 44 further depicts Hell and its excruciating torments saying that sinners move between Hell and boiling water. The Arabic word *ḥamīm* denotes "boiling water" and the Arabic word *ān* employed herein designates the utmost degree of heat. Thus, they burn and thirst and ask for water on the one hand and boiling water will be given unto them or boiling water will be splashed upon them on the other and it will be an excruciating chastisement. The blessed Verse 45 is a serious and awakening warning and a Divine Favor: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٤٦﴾ وَلِمَن خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

﴿٤٧﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

46. But for him who fears the standing before his Lord,
there shall be two Gardens.

47. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you
both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Fearing standing before God Almighty prevents man from committing sins and will lead to Paradise, as it is reflected elsewhere in the Glorious Qur'an (80:40-41): "But as for him who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from concupiscent desires, indeed, Paradise shall be his abode."). The blessed Verse 46 is also saying that for he who fears standing before his Lord, there shall be two Gardens in Paradise. Fearing standing before Lord means that one who knows God Almighty through His Greatness, Glory, and Lordship, such knowledge causes fear in him and there shall be two Gardens in Paradise for him. It may also mean the fear of Resurrection and its stations and standing before His Threshold for records of deeds and Divine Supervision and Constant Care for all mankind. It is worthy of note that fear is supposed to spring from knowing Divine Lordship. Imam Ṣādiq (AS) said: "He who believes that God sees him and hears whatever he says, such belief restrains him from committing evil deeds. Such person fears standing before God Almighty and restrains himself from concupiscent desires.¹ It is narrated that the Noble Prophet (SAW) said unto Imam 'Alī (AS): "Several things lead to

¹ *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, under the blessed Verse in question.

deliverance one of which is fear of God inwardly and outwardly."¹ Fear of standing before God Almighty in this world shall lead to security from all fears in the Hereafter, as it is reflected in other Qur'anic Verses, e.g. "There is no doubt that indeed believers who love Allah no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve," (10:62). In short, fear of God Almighty leads to submission to the Truth and doing righteous good deeds. Thus, there is no other condition besides fear of God Almighty. For one who fears standing before his Lord, there shall be two Gardens in Paradise. The blessed Verse 47 repeats the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Tafsīr Kanz al-Daqa'iq*, under the blessed Verse in question.

﴿٤٨﴾ ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ

﴿٤٩﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

﴿٥٠﴾ فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ

﴿٥١﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

48. [Gardens with trees] with spreading and fresh branches [with diverse Blessings].
 49. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?
 50. In those two Gardens shall two springs be flowing.
 51. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

These blessed Verses depict the two Gardens in Paradise saying that they have different Blessings and trees with fresh branches. The Arabic word *dhawātā* is dual and designates "having, owing." The Arabic word *afnān* is the plural of *fanān* denoting "fresh branch" and also "kind, type." The word may connote both senses in the blessed Verse 48, namely it may refer to fresh branches of trees in Paradise which are unlike trees in this world which may have old, dead, or fresh branches and it may also make a reference to the diversity of Blessings in Paradise. Both applications are accurate, though the trees in Paradise might be different in that one single tree might have different branches with different kinds of fruit.

The blessed Verse 49 reiterates the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?" Since a verdant garden is supposed to

have trees and flowing springs, the blessed Verse 50 is saying that "In those two Gardens two springs shall be flowing." Addressing jinn and men, the blessed Verse 51 repeats the question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

﴿٥٢﴾ فِيهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ

﴿٥٣﴾ فَبَأَى آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

52. In those two Gardens shall be two kinds of each and every fruit.

53. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

There shall be abundance, diversity, and availability in Paradise. Regarding the fruits of the twain Gardens in Paradise, the blessed Verse 52 is saying that two kinds shall be found there of each and every fruit, a kind available in this world and another which was not seen in the mundane world. The rhetorical question is reiterated in the blessed Verse 53: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٥٤﴾ مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَاطِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ وَجَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ

﴿٥٥﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

54. Reclining upon the couches lined with silk, brocade, and the fruits of the two Gardens will be near at hand.

55. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Three characteristics of the twain Gardens in Paradise were enumerated in the preceding blessed Verses. The blessed Verse 54 treats of the fourth characteristic, saying that people of Paradise recline upon couches lined with brocade. One usually reclines upon something when he happens to be in peace and utmost security. The depiction reflects perfect serenity of the souls of the people of Paradise. The Arabic plural noun *furush* denotes carpets and couches. *Batā'in* designates lining and *istabraq* is applied to thick brocade. It would be interest to see that the most precious fabric in this world will be used as the lining of couches in Paradise, connoting that the covers shall be indescribable in terms of delicacy, beauty, and appeal, since lining is not visible and the lowliest kinds of fabric are used for lining in this world. However, the most precious item in this world shall be the most insignificant in Paradise. Thus, what shall the precious items be in Paradise? Divine Blessings in the Hereafter shall be describable neither in our terms and nor by our imagination. We may solely have a vague idea about such otherworldly Blessings. The fifth characteristic of the Blessings of these Gardens in Paradise is that the ripe fruits shall be near at hand there. It shall be unlike the ripe fruits for whose picking one has to take troubles. The Arabic word

jana designates "ripe fruit" and the word *dān* denotes "near." The blessed Verse 55 is again addressed to all jinn and men: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٥٦﴾ فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ

﴿٥٧﴾ فَبَأَى آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

56. In both Gardens of Paradise shall be chaste females restraining their glances, desiring none except their husbands with whom no man or jinni has had intercourse.

57. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Five Divine Blessings of the twain Gardens in Paradise were enumerated in the preceding blessed Verses and the blessed Verse 56 treats of the six Blessing – chaste spouses in Paradise. The blessed Verse is saying that there shall be women in those palaces in Paradise who restraining their glances solely look at their husbands and love no one but them and no jinni or man has ever touched them. Thus, they shall be virgin and undefiled in any respect. It is narrated on the authority of Abūdhār Ghaffārī that the woman in Paradise shall say unto her husband: "By the Glory of my Lord! I find nothing better than you in Paradise. Praise be to God Almighty Who married me unto you."¹

The Arabic word *ṭarf* denotes "eyelid" and since eyelids move while glancing, it figuratively connotes "glance." Thus, the expression *qāṣirāt al-ṭarf* denotes "[females] restraining [their] glances" connoting that they love their husbands. It is one of the best merits of a woman to solely think of her husband and only love him. The Arabic verbal form *yaṭmithhunna* ("they menstruate") deriving from *ṭ-m-th*

¹ *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*, under the blessed Verse in question.

("menstruate, deflorate") ad hoc connotes that females in Paradise shall be virgin.

The blessed Verse 57, addressed to jinn and men, poses the question anew: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both deny?"

﴿٥٨﴾ كَأَنَّھُنَّ الیاقوتُ والمرجانُ

﴿٥٩﴾ فَبأیِّ آلاء ربِّكما تُكذِّبانِ

58.They are like rubies and coral.

59.Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse 58 further depicts spouses in Paradise saying that they are like rubies in terms of rosiness and purity and like coral in terms of whiteness and beauty. When the colors of rubies and coral, namely red and white, intermingle, a very beautiful color will be produced. Ruby is a mineral which is usually red in color. Coral is a marine animal like branches and twigs of trees whose colors include white and red, but the white kind is seemingly intended herein. The blessed Verse 59 again asks the question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٦٠﴾ هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

﴿٦١﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

60. Is there any reward for good other than good?

61. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

By the word good (*iḥsān*) mentioned herein, doing righteous good deeds and doing good to others are intended.¹ Imam Ṣādiq (AS) said: "The blessed Verse 'Is there any reward for good other than good' applies to believers and disbelievers, since whoever does good to another, the latter is supposed to return the good done to him."² Imam 'Alī narrates from the Messenger of Allah (SAW) that God Almighty said: "Is the reward of the one to whom I have bestowed Favor is other than Paradise?"³ In short the blessed Verse in question is saying that those who have done righteous good deeds in this world shall be granted Divine Rewards. The blessed Verse 61 repeats the question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Tafsīr Rāḥnamā*; *Tafsīr Nūr*.

² *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*; *Tafsīr al-Mizān*.

³ Shaykh Ṭūsī's *Amālī*, vol. 1, p. 182.

﴿٦٢﴾ وَمِنْ دُونِهِمَا جَنَّاتٌ

﴿٦٣﴾ فَبَأَىٰ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

62. And besides these two Gardens, there are two other Gardens.

63. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Resuming the discussion the two Gardens in Paradise in store for the God fearing and the enumeration of Divine Blessings, the blessed Verse 62 makes mention of two Gardens in Paradise located on a lower level reserved naturally for those who are on a lower level of belief in and fearing God Almighty. In other words, there is a hierarchy in terms of belief in God Almighty and doing righteous good deeds. Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that two other Gardens are to be found on a level lower than that of the aforementioned Gardens. There are two interpretations for the blessed Verse one of which was already mentioned. According to the other interpretation, the phrase "besides these two" (*min dunihimā*) connotes that there are two other Gardens for the same believers who may enjoy themselves in those two Gardens as well, since man seeks diversity by nature and is delighted by the same. Nonetheless, taking into account the contextual meaning and the traditions narrated regarding the interpretation of the blessed Verse in question, the former interpretation is seemingly more consistent. Thus, according to a tradition narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (AS):¹ "Do not say that Paradise is one since God Almighty says that

¹ *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*.

besides those two Paradises, there are two others. Do not say either that there is solely one level, since God Almighty says some levels are higher than others and the difference in levels is a matter of degrees." In this vein, there is a Prophetic tradition according to which "Two Paradises are from gold for those near to God Almighty and two Paradises for the people of the Right Hand." The blessed Verse 63 poses the oft-repeated rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٦٤﴾ مُدْهًا مَّتَانِ

﴿٦٥﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

64. [The two Gardens appear] dark green [in color owing to the density of trees].

65. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic word *madhāmma* deriving from *d-h-m* is cognate with *idhīmām* denoting raven black color herein connoting a garden seeming black due to the density of its trees. Since such color reflects utmost freshness of plants and trees, the expression designates utmost verdure of the twain Paradises. According to a number of traditions, water, verdure, and beauty engender happiness and delight.¹ The blessed Verse 65 further asks: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 59, p. 44.

﴿٦٦﴾ فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ

﴿٦٧﴾ فَبَأَى آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

66. In the two Gardens shall be two springs
gushing forth.

67. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will
you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The Arabic word *naddākh* denotes "gushing forth." Thus, the blessed Verse 67 is saying that in those two Gardens, two springs shall be gushing forth. It goes without saying that looking at natural landscapes is the best delight. Water is a Blessing and its gushing forth is another Blessing. The blessed Verse 67 further poses the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

﴿٦٨﴾ فِيهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ

﴿٦٩﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

68. In the two Gardens there shall be fruits and date-palms and pomegranates.

69. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Regarding the fruits of Paradise, the blessed Verse 68 is saying that there is abundance of fruits and those like dates and pomegranates in the two Gardens. The Arabic word *fākiha* is certainly quite broad in its range of senses encompassing all kinds of fruit, but the significance of dates and pomegranates are mentioned owing to their significance. Some Qur'anic exegetes falsely maintain that semantically speaking, the Arabic word *fākiha* excludes dates and pomegranates. Lexicographers disagree with this baseless view. Basically, specific in lieu of general in cases of expressing privileges and merits is quite common. In short, dates and pomegranates have their prime of place among fruits in Paradise, since they are rich in vitamins.¹ The blessed Verse 69 repeats the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ Fifteen nutritive elements and five vitamins are reportedly found in dates. Furthermore, some parts of date palms are rich in medicinal ingredients. Regarding pomegranates, according to a number of Islamic traditions, they are the best of fruits (sayyid al-fākiha; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 63). Nutrition experts enumerate many qualities for pomegranates, including refining the blood, richness in Vitamin C. Other good qualities have also been mentioned for sweet and sour pomegranates, including: strengthening the stomach, gums, the eyes, treatment of choleric fevers, jaundice, scabies, chronic ulcers, and diarrhea. According to a tradition narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (AS): "Let your children eat pomegranates as they lead to their faster growth" (*Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 66, p. 164). According to another tradition, "Eating pomegranates by children makes them speak earlier" (*Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 66, p. 165). It is also narrated from Imam Bāqir (AS) and Imam Ṣādiq (AS): "Pomegranates were the Messenger of Allah's (SAW) most favorite fruit (*Uṣūl Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 352).

﴿٧٠﴾ فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ

﴿٧١﴾ فَبَأَى آلَاءُ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

70. There shall be women of fair face and good character in those Gardens.

71. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse 70 further treats of other Divine Blessings, saying that there shall be women fair of face and good of character in these two Paradises. The Arabic word *khayr* generally connotes spiritual and immaterial good and beauty and the word *ḥusn* generally designates beauty of looks and appearance. A tradition narrated regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question enumerates many good characteristics for women in Paradise which may allude to those of women in this world and serve as a model for all women. Such characteristics include: kindness in speech, cleanliness and purity, restraining from inflicting harms on others, and turning away their glances from those outside the circle of kinship. In short, all the physical and non-physical beauties expected in a desirable spouse may be found in them. Likewise the blessed Qur'anic Verse expresses such good characteristics in a terse phrase: "of fair face and good characters" (*khayrāt ḥisān*). According to a Prophetic tradition: "Women in Paradise have fair faces and good characters."¹ It is also mentioned in narrations that "of fair face and good characters" refers to righteous good women in this world who shall be fairer than wide-eyed *ḥūrī*'s in

¹ *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thiqalayn*, under the blessed Verse in question.

Paradise.¹ The blessed Verse 71 repeats the question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Uṣūl Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 156.

﴿٧٢﴾ حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ

﴿٧٣﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

72. Wide-eyed *ḥūrī's* of Paradise guarded in pavilions.

73. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

Further depicting the women in Paradise, the blessed Verse 72 is saying that they are *ḥūrīs* guarded in pavilions in Paradise. The word *ḥūr* is the plural of *ḥawrā'* denoting a woman the pupils whose eyes are raven black and the whiteness is quite transparent. It is also applied to women of fair complexion. The word *maqṣūrāt* connotes that they only belong to their husbands and they are well guarded from others. The Arabic word *khiyām* is the plural of *khayma* denoting "pavilion." According to Islamic traditions, pavilions in Paradise are unlike those of this world in terms of vastness and beauty. It also worthy of note that according to lexicographers and lexicologists, the Arabic word *khayma*, besides denoting pavilion and tent, is also applied to wooden or any round dwelling place. It is also said that the Arabic word designates dwelling places which are made of stones and the like.¹ The blessed Verse 74 reiterates the rhetorical question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Lisān al-'Arab; Majma' al-Baḥrayn; al-Munjid.*

﴿٧٤﴾ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ

﴿٧٥﴾ فَبَأَىٰ آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

74. Whom no man or jinni has touched before people of Paradise.

75. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse 74 enumerates another characteristic of *ḥūrīs* in Paradise, saying that they have been touched neither by any jinni nor by any man. In other words, they are virgin. Thus, by "women of fair face and good characters" good and righteous women of this world are intended who have solely intercourse with their husbands. However, "untouched" (*lam yaṭmithhunna*) is the attribute of *ḥūrīs* in Paradise. According to other Qur'anic Verses, men and women who are married to each other and are amongst the believers and the people of Paradise shall join each other in Paradise and shall enjoy their lives in the best manner there. According to traditions, owing to their invocations and righteous good deeds, such women are more exalted than *ḥūrīs* in Paradise.¹ The blessed Verse 75 poses the oft-repeated question: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?"

¹ *Tafsīr Durr al-Manthūr*, p. 151; *Uṣūl Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 156.

﴿٧٦﴾ مُتَكِينٍ عَلَى رَفْرَفٍ خُضِرَ وَعَبْقَرِيٌّ حِسَانٍ

﴿٧٧﴾ فَبَأَىٰ آلَاءُ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

76. Reclining on couches covered by the best and the most beautiful green fabrics.

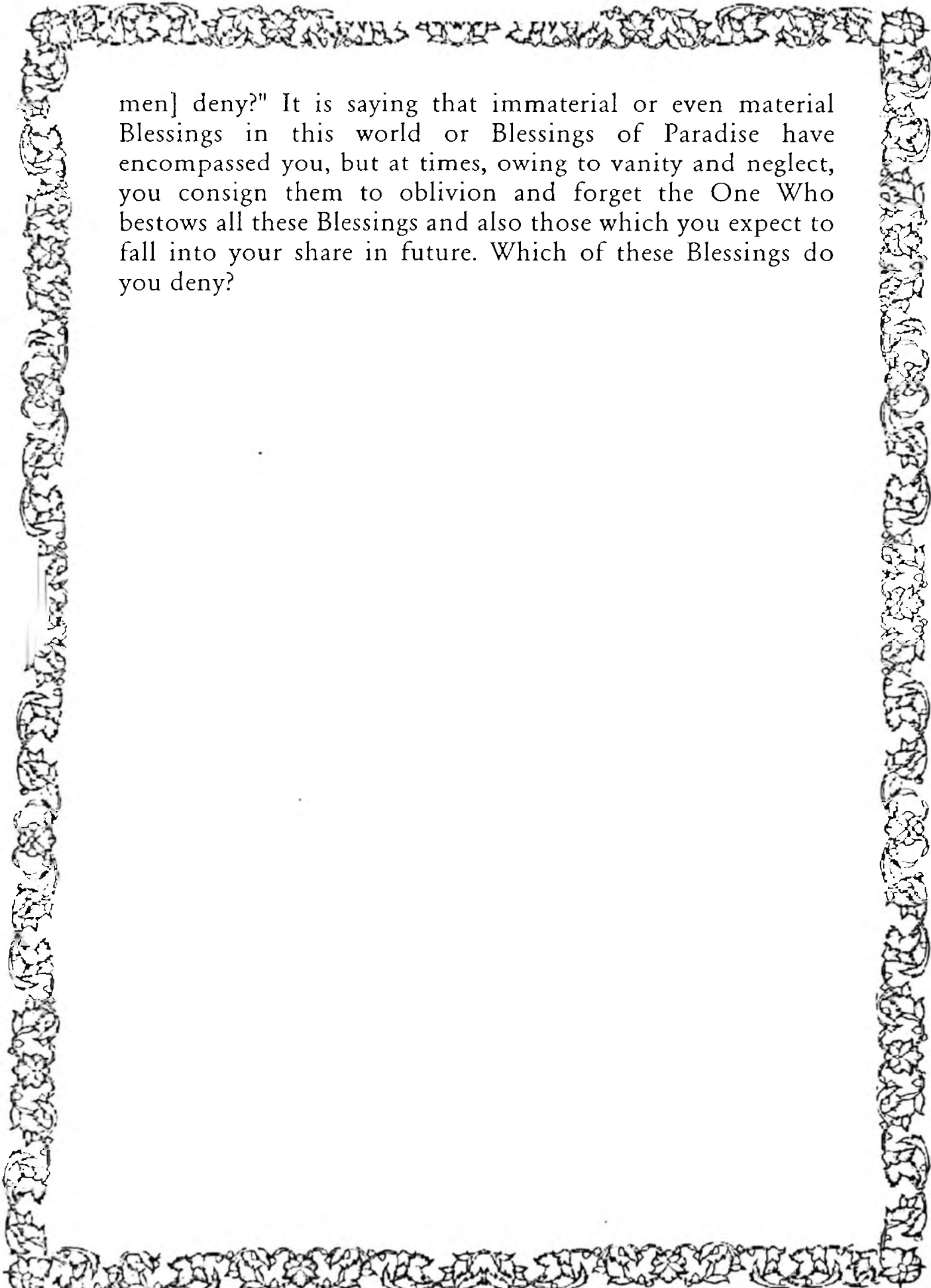
77. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and men] deny?

Exegesis:

The blessed Verse 76 provides the last depiction of the Blessings in Paradise, saying that the inhabitants of the twain Paradises recline on couches covered by the best and the fairest green fabrics. The Arabic word *raḥraf* originally denotes spread tree leaves, but it is figuratively applied to beautiful and colorful fabrics which are similar to garden landscapes. The word '*abqarī* originally denotes any rare or unrivalled person or thing. Thus, the word is applied to scholars rare amongst people. It is also said that 'Abqar was the name of a city in which silk fabrics were made.¹ The original sense is obsolete and the Arabic word '*abqarī* refers to an ingenious person who is hard to find. The Arabic word *ḥisān* is the plural form of *ḥasan* denoting "good, beautiful."

In short, all these expressions reflect that all things in Paradise, including fruits, food, palaces, mansions, carpets, and couches are all the best and unrivaled in terms of quality. However, it is worthy of note that such expressions may not fully express such great and unique concepts but they solely reflect shadows of them same. The blessed Verse 77 poses the oft-repeated rhetorical question for the last time: "Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both [jinn and

¹ Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī's *Tafsīr*.

A decorative border of repeating floral and leaf motifs surrounds the text.

men] deny?" It is saying that immaterial or even material Blessings in this world or Blessings of Paradise have encompassed you, but at times, owing to vanity and neglect, you consign them to oblivion and forget the One Who bestows all these Blessings and also those which you expect to fall into your share in future. Which of these Blessings do you deny?

﴿٧٨﴾ تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

78. Blessed is the Name of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honor.

Exegesis

All Blessings, beauties, rewards, and recompenses are manifestations of Divine Lordship. Thus, the last blessed Verse of the Chapter in question is saying that the Name of your Lord Who is Majestic and Glorious is Blessed and Intransient. The Arabic word *tabārak* is cognate with *bark* denoting "camel breast." Since camels lie down somewhere without moving and their breasts touch the earth, the word connotes constancy and intransience. As remaining capital engenders many a benefit, useful things are referred to as *mubārak*, the worthiest being for such designation is the Pure Divine Essence, the Source of all Good and Blessings. Thus, the blessed Verse in question is saying that Great and Glorious is the Name of your Lord Who is the Absolute Owner of Glory, Greatness, Magnanimity, Graciousness, and Bountifulness. The blessed Chapter opened with the Divine Attribute "the Most Gracious" (*Raḥmān*) denoting the Vastness of Bounties and Graciousness of the One Lord, following which different kinds of His Bounties and Blessings are enumerated. The blessed Chapter ends in the Name of the Owner of Glory and Greatness, connoting that what He bestows springs solely from His Greatness and reflects His Glory and Magnanimity. It is saying that you are supposed to glorify the Origin of Bounties by praising His Attributes of Glory and Greatness. Some Qur'anic exegetes say that His Name alludes to all His Attributes and His Attributes are in His Pure Essence and the expression "Owner of Majesty and Glory" makes a reference to all His Most

Beautiful and Glorious Attributes. "Owner of Majesty" alludes to His Negative Attributes and "Owner of Glory" refers to His Positive Attributes.

It would be of interest to read a few traditions in this vein.

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW) that someone invoked God Almighty in his presence, saying: "O Owner of Majesty and Glory!" The Noble Prophet (SAW) said: "Now that you invoked God Almighty by this Attribute, your prayer shall be answered. You ask Him to grant you anything you desire."¹

According to a Prophetic tradition, the Noble Prophet of Islam (SAW) noticed that a man was standing while establishing prayers. Following genuflexion (*rukūʿ*), prostration (*sujūd*), *ṣalām*, and *tashahHūd*, he invoked God Almighty and called Him by His Attributes, Owner of Majesty, Owner of Glory, the Living (*Ḥayy*), the Ever Standing (or Self-Existent; *Qayyūm*), the Noble Prophet (SAW) said: "This man called Allah by a Great Name that whenever one calls Him by that Attribute, He shall answer his prayers."²

A tradition is narrated from Imam Bāqir (AS) regarding the exegesis of the blessed Verse in question according to which he said: "We are Divine Majesty and Glory as He cherishes us by making his servants obey us."³ It goes without saying that the family of the Prophet (SAW) solely calls people unto God Almighty and obedience to Him. They are like guides and beacons and life boats in the agitated sea of this mundane life. Thus, they are the instances

¹ *Tafsīr Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 153; *Tafsīr Nimūna*, under the blessed Verse in question.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Tafsīr Burhān*; *Tafsīr Ṣāfi*, under the blessed Verse in question.

of Divine Bounties bestowed by the Owner of Majesty and Glory, since God Almighty provides people with Guidance through His friends.

O Lord! You are the Owner of Majesty and Glory. By Your Majesty and Glory! Do not deprive us from Bounties and Blessings of Paradise. O Lord! We deny none of your Blessings, but consider ourselves encompassed by them. Grant us Your Blessings at all times. Amen O Lord of the worlds!